



LOOKING OUT FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT

Protecting public safety pensions

Not only did I actively support measures to protect our schools, neighborhoods and communities, I also worked to protect the brave men and women who have dedicated their lives to our public safety.



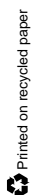
During the budget negotiations, Democrat lawmakers in the House and Senate started looking at raiding a pension fund of our law enforcement officers and fire fighters. Called the LEOFF 1 retirement system, it had generated more than \$1 billion in surplus funds back when our stock market was strong. When the stock market cooled, the LEOFF 1 surplus had dropped by nearly \$1 billion. Thanks to our strong efforts to protect the fund, we saved our

police and fire department retirement system and prevented our state's budget from falling even further out of balance.



**State Representative
John Ahern**

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**KEEPING SPOKANE
NEIGHBORHOODS SAFE**

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KEEPING SPOKANE NEIGHBORHOODS SAFE



**State Representative
John Ahern**



From the Desk of John Ahern

Dear Friends,

Keeping our Spokane neighborhoods safe, getting drugs out of our schools and away from kids, and preventing the state from moving dangerous sex offenders anywhere near our community were all top priorities of mine as your state representative. We do have some achievements in the areas of crime, drugs and public safety you should know about.

I'm pleased to report that we made important progress on all of those issues and more. Even with the 49-49 tie between Republicans and Democrats in the House, some things are too important to let them fall victim to mindless partisanship and bickering.

If you have any questions, concerns or advice, please don't hesitate to call, write or e-mail me. As I always say, the more I hear from you, the better I can represent you in Olympia.

Sincerely,

John Ahern

Your State Representative

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A COMMITMENT TO SAFETY

Both Brad Benson and I, your two state representatives, strongly believe that public safety is the paramount responsibility of government. While our national leaders work diligently in your nation's capital to protect us from the threat of terrorism at home and abroad, we're committed to doing everything we can at the state level to make our Spokane neighborhoods safe.

PROTECTING CHILDREN & STUDENTS

Few things tear at my heart as strongly as when I hear about a child or young adult falling victim to crime or drugs. I actively supported a number of measures in the House this year designed to protect our young people. They are, after all, Washington's future, and they deserve our best efforts today.



Stepping up the war against meth



Methamphetamine, or "meth" is a growing and deadly threat in our state and in our local community. We are finding it in homes with children, on our streets, and even in our schools. New production methods have made it cheap to manufacture – and this dangerous drug now poses a great danger to the safety of our children.

This year, we passed a law making it illegal to sell or possess large quantities of the ingredients used to make meth. Unfortunately, a bill I co-sponsored, which would have added meth production to our state's list of "three strikes and you're out" offenses was blocked by the governor and House Democrats. I'll keep working to see meth

production added to this list, because just maybe criminals will think twice before manufacturing this drug if it means the possibility of life behind bars.

The manufacturing of meth has already resulted in the deaths of innocent children in Spokane. It has ruined the lives of countless families here and around the state. And just the production of this drug poses a serious threat to our environment because of the chemicals used. At one point, dedicated Spokane law enforcement was successful in shutting down 11 meth labs in 11 days.

As long as there are more meth labs out there, and we all know there are, I'll be working to see our police get the tools and resources they need to combat this evil substance.

Combating student identity theft



our state's colleges and universities from using a student's Social Security number for any identification purposes, except those required for employment, financial aid, transcripts, or as allowed by state or federal laws.

While protecting our students is an important first step, I also supported legislation that would have allowed the Washington State Patrol to create an identity theft bureau, a specific task force to track down and prosecute these crooks. This measure fell victim to partisan politics, but I'll work to see that it's reconsidered next year.



KEEPING SPOKANE STREETS SAFE

When criminals are allowed to run rampant, no one is safe. That's why I supported a wide variety of public safety bills to attack crime from a variety of angles and directions. As you read through this section of my newsletter, consider whether there are other public safety issues you'd like to see me addressing, and please call, write or email me with your questions, comments, concerns and advice.

Keeping sexual predators away from Spokane



Thanks to an agreement we made with the governor, the state's Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) won't be building a "rehabilitation center" (halfway house) for our state's most dangerous sexual predators in Airway Heights or Medical Lake. Both locations had originally been proposed by DSHS.

Instead of building a series of small, expensive facilities throughout the state, I made it clear to the governor that it not only was the idea unrealistic, but it was also irresponsible. For the time being, our state will start housing these dangerous criminals who have already served their prison time, at a facility on McNeil Island, far from Spokane. This location offers an added degree of safety for Washington citizens, and makes the most sense.

What mattered most to me as your state representative was keeping these dangerous predators as far away as possible from the children and families who live in our community. Until they have a cure that will keep sex offenders from re-offending, I'll keep working to see that the Spokane area doesn't become a dumping ground for the rest of our state's criminals.

Assistance for victims of violent crime

This year, I supported an amendment to our state's operating budget that would have added \$5 million dollars to help victims of violent crimes. Unfortunately, House Democrats voted down the measure. I believe that helping victims of crimes is an important role that our state government must play, and I'll work hard to see that needed resources are allocated to help victims recover from these terrible crimes.